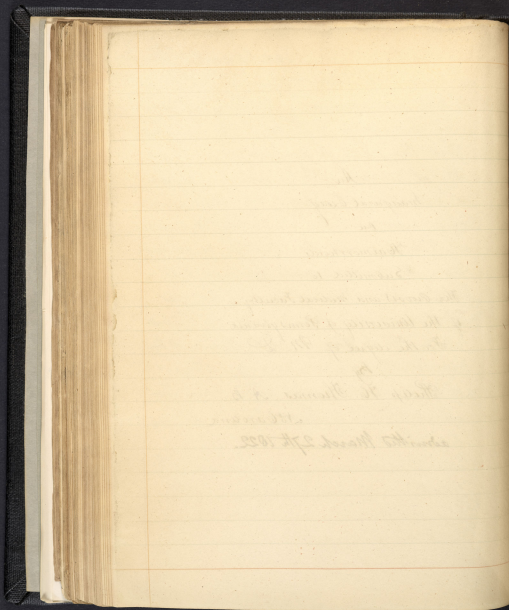


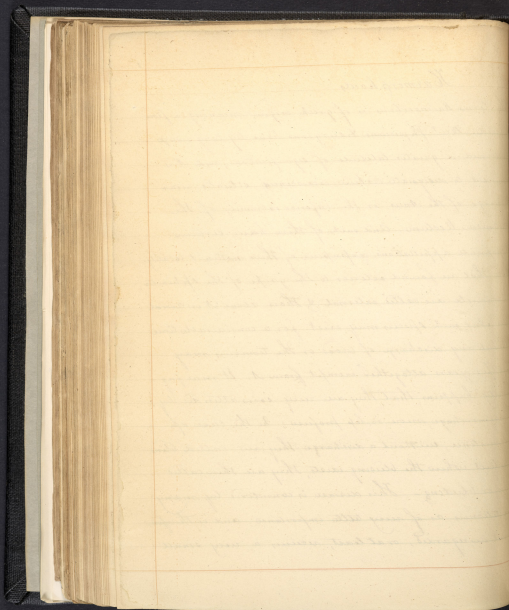
An  
Inaugural Essay  
on  
Hæmorrhoids  
Submitted to  
The Provost and Medical Faculty  
of the University of Pennsylvania  
For the degree of M. D.

By  
Philip H. Thomas A. B.  
of Carolina  
admitted March 27th 1822.



## Haemorrhoids

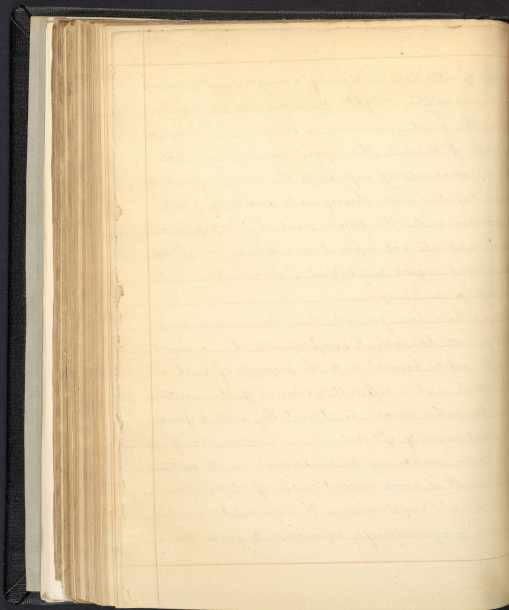
The term Haemorrhoids is of Greek origin meaning a flow of blood. But Physicians & Surgeons have by long usage sanctioned a greater latitude of signification, and it is now used to designate certain excrescences situated near the verge of the Anus or the inferior extremity of the Intestinum Rectum. And each of these have certain appropriate appellations expressive of their nature & locality. Those that are found exterior to the gripe of the sphincter ani muscle are called external & those above it internal piles. And each species may exist for a considerable time without any discharge of blood or the tumours may exist for years altogether exempt from it. It more frequently happens, that they are very soon attended by an haemorrhage, more or less profuse; in the case of their existence, without a discharge they are called blind piles, but when the bleeding exists, they are then called open, or bleeding. This disease is considered by many practitioners, as of very little importance, and is therefore almost disregarded, or at least, receives a very small





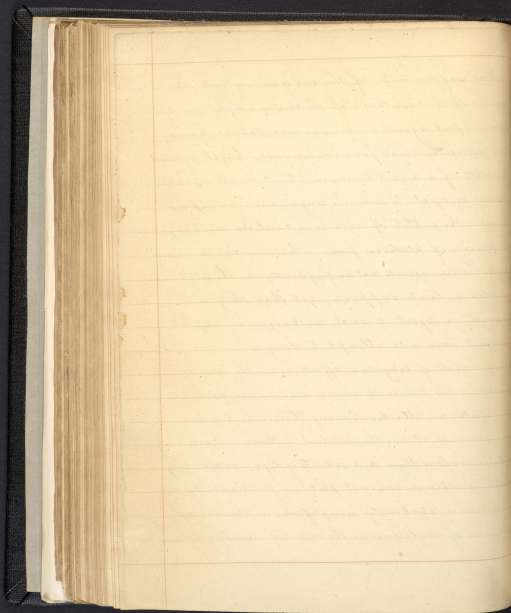
degree of attention, while by a majority it is viewed  
in a very different light. When we take into consid-  
eration the great vascularity of the parts; their extreme  
liability to disease, their exposed situation, by which  
they are unavoidably exposed to the action of irritating  
causes together with this exquisite sensibility which  
is common with other diseased parts they propose, we  
must necessarily look upon it as a disease meriting  
our utmost regard & a subject of much interest both  
to the Physician & Surgeon.

Hæmorrhoids have generally been considered as being  
divided into Idiopathic & Symptomatic, but a doubt  
may be safely hazarded as to the propriety of such a  
distinction, as it is difficult to conceive of their existence  
as an idiopathic disease; or at least they will be found  
in a great majority of cases, purely symptomatic of  
some more extensively diseased action in the system  
or the result of some incident cause of obstruction  
of the Hæmorrhoidal veins - The internal Hæmorrhoids  
at times being exceedingly numerous, & from the

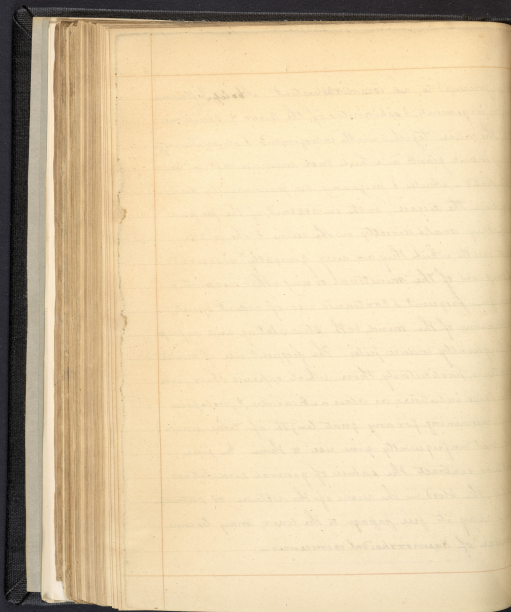


peculiar conformation of the surrounding parts, are deprived of the assistance of muscular action, one of the principal agents in venous circulation, having also to raise the blood for a considerable height against the gravity of a high column without the aid of valves, are very subject to venous congestions; predisposed to become the outlet of vicarious, & critical discharges, and the drains of plethora from whatever cause arising. Though Cullen asserts not so frequently as the Statisticians have been led to suppose; yet that they are frequently subject to such discharges, no one at the present time will attempt to deny—

Certain habits of body and affections of the mind predispose to this disease & many diseases are particularly apt to excite an attack. Among those who are particularly liable to it are the indolent & those whose avocations confine them to a sedentary life, or take long continu'd exercise in an erect posture, particularly our horse backs as is strikingly exemplified in the case of practitioners of medicine in the country among whom

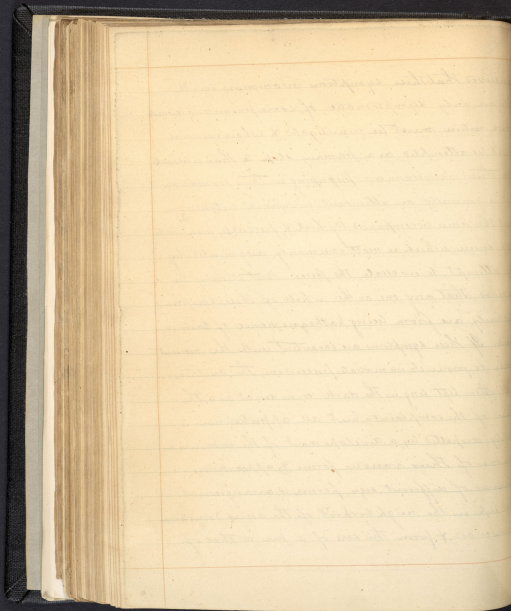


piles prevail to an extraordinary extent. Abscess. Inflammations, enlargements, & schirrhous of the liver & spleen are often the cause together with enlargements & obstructions of the mesenteric glands as which case cancer are not to be anticipated - Whites & pregnancy are prominently leads to produce the disease, both on account of the purpura which they make directly in the veins & the course habits with which they are very generally associated. Suppression of the menstrual or any other accustomed discharge - frequent & continued use of ardent spirits, the passions of the mind, both stimulating and depressing, frequently induce piles. The frequent use of drastic purgatives, particularly those which expend their force on the large intestines, as aloes - Scarcely, & prolapsus are if remaining for any great length of time unremoved, not unfrequently give rise to them. In fine, "whatever contracts the sphere of general circulation or repels the blood in the region of the rectum, or obstructs in any way its free passage to the liver, may become the cause of hemorrhoidal excrescences -



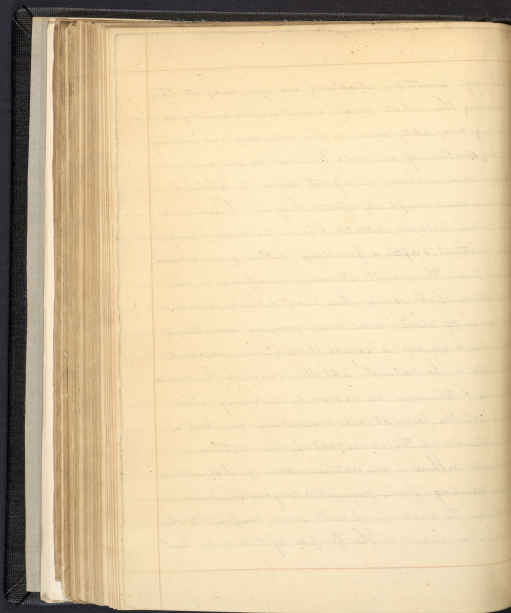
Before the causes already mentioned we have reason  
to believe they are frequently brought on by diseases of  
the stomach & elementary canal and Dr Caldwell in his  
very excellent notes to Haller's practice of physic says  
this is invariably the case when they exist in patients of  
of a gouty disposition. He also says he never saw a  
case which was violent & very troublesome in which  
the stomach was not much implicated, from which  
we may deduce a strong evidence of the pervading  
sympathetic & extensor agencies of this important  
viscus & learn the necessity of enquiring particularly  
what may be its connections with any disease  
which we may be called to treat.

The symptoms are very various & most commonly circu-  
larly equivocal, before the appearance of the tumour,  
or some direct indication of their existence. Headache  
anorexia, vertigo, caput, Stomach difficulty of  
breathing, nausea & vomiting, pain in the back &  
loins, small quick pulse with pyrexia frequently  
precede an attack. Though it may be easily

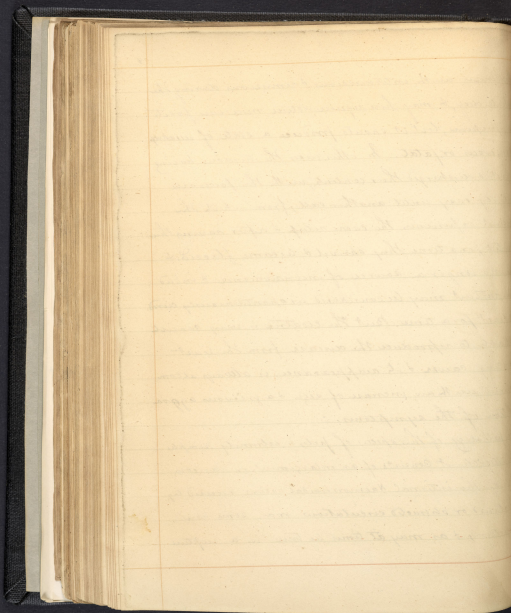




perceived that these symptoms in common with  
apoplexy, are only symptomatic, of some preexisting disease  
whose nature must be investigated, & whose removal  
must be attempted as a primary step to their removal.  
When these excrescences are propagating in their formation  
there is generally an attendant uneasiness & itching  
about the anus accompanied by heat & fullness, pain more  
or less severe which is most commonly augmented by  
every attempt to evacuate the bowels. But it may be  
perceived that any one or the whole of these symptoms,  
collectively are from being pathognomonic of hæmorrhoids.  
If these symptoms are coexistent with the named  
disease or prove its immediate precursors, the practitioner  
is not often left long in the dark or in doubt as to the  
nature of the complaint - but all apprehension is  
quickly dispelled by a development of the tumours in  
some one of their various forms & appearances.  
Excrescences of different size, forms, & arrangement  
shoot up in the neighbourhood of the anus. Sometimes  
circumscribed, & from the size of a pea to that of



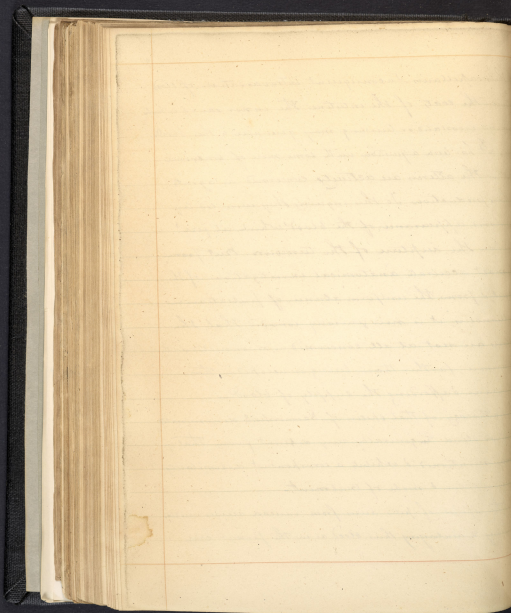
a hemorrhoid sometimes attacking one vein only at other involving the whole mass, & not unfrequently extending completely around the intestine resembling the constriction of a broad ligature on the gut. Always diminishing in a great degree its caliber & in some cases completely obliterating it. There is a short time become irritated & insupportably painful to the patient & after a few days, either from excoriation or from the violent straining necessary to the evacuation of the bowels, they burst & this is followed by a gush of blood, more or less profuse sometimes dangerous & always a source of much trouble and solicitude to the patient. At this crisis of the disease tormina & tenismus are extremely distressing, blood flows with the feces at each evacuation or what is more alarming the inner coat of the rectum is protruded where is an interruption of that intestine from straining forced, frequent, & long continued — Sometimes the discharge of blood is not confined to the time of a visit to the temple of Cloacina, but



8

continues with intermissions & remissions during the whole day, & may here require active measures for its suppression, lest it should produce a state of uraemia dangerous or fatal. In other cases, the tumour having burst & discharged their contents, with the forces are entirely easy until another call, from which the patient experiences the same relief & after having thus existed for a time they shrivel & become flaccid & are no longer a source of inconvenience & indeed the patient may be considered as spontaneously cured at least for a time. But the cicatrix is very sensile & liable to reproduce the disease from the least exciting cause & its reappearance is always accompanied with an increase of size & a serious aggravation of the symptoms.

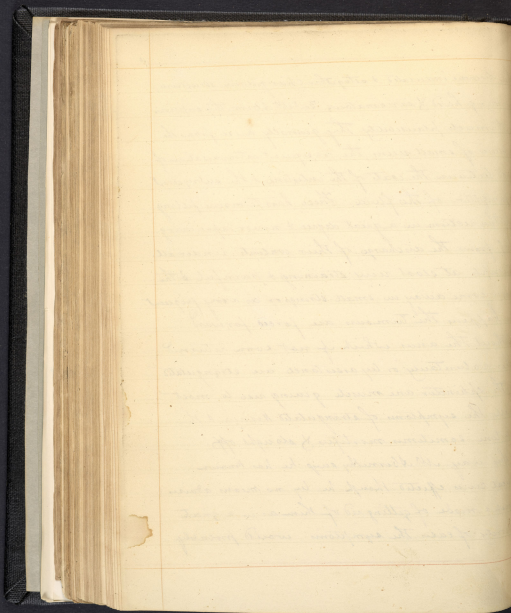
The pathology of this species of piles is extremely simple & intelligible. It consists of an enlargement or varicose state of the internal haemorrhoidal vein caused by weakened or obstructed circulation or as some have conjectured & as may at times be true in a rupture



of their capillaries & a consequent extravasation of blood between the coats of the intestine the inner one of which becoming incarcerated or luxating may give rise to the bloody flux. It has been a question with some men of medicine whether the arteries are actually concerned as agents in this production. To this inquiry they were led by the florid appearance of the blood which at first flows on the rupture of the tumours. But from the most accurate anatomical investigation of the subject, & from the uniform absence of pulsation in the tumours, it is now generally conceded that the arteries are not at all concerned, or connected with the disease, farther than being enveloped in the membrane & affording the supply of blood—

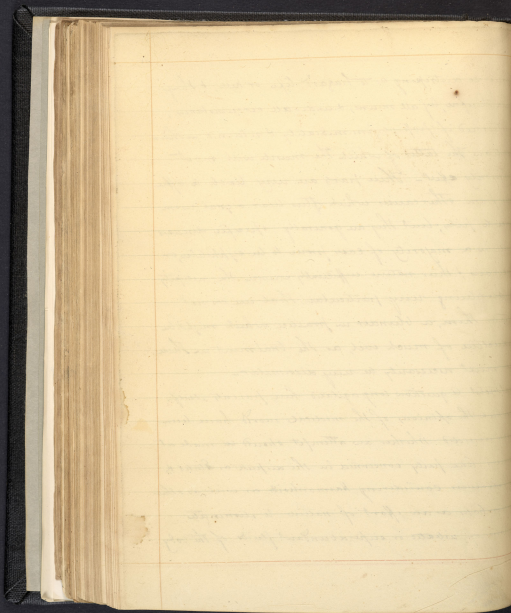
The pathology of that species of Haemorrhoid denominated occult or blind is generally very different from that of the already mentioned & exhibits a correspondent dissimilarity in its symptoms & mode of treatment.

When this species of piles arises from varicose veins instead of luxating & discharging their blood as in the former case



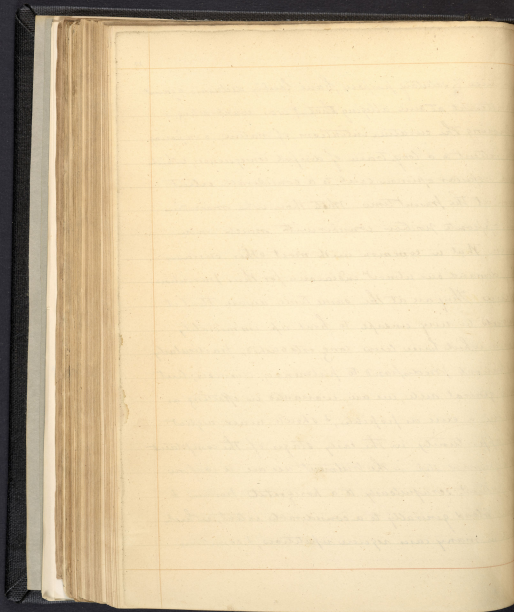


they become indurated & altogether changed in structure  
 becoming hard & sarcomatous; But Mr. Abernethy supports  
 with much plausibility they generally arise from the  
 rupture of small veins, the consequent extravasation of  
 blood between the coats of the intestine & the subsequent  
 organization of this fluid. These hard tumours filling  
 up the rectum in a great degree & never experiencing  
 relief from the discharge of their contents under all  
 attempts at stool very straining & painful & the  
 force come away in small strings or as very frequent  
 by happens the tumours are forced forward  
 without the anus which if not soon returned  
 either voluntarily or by assistance are strangulated  
 by the sphincter and muscle giving rise to most  
 or all the symptoms of a strangulated hernia & the  
 intestine sometimes mortifies & sloughs off.  
 In this way Mr. Abernethy says he has known  
 radical cure effected though he by no means advises  
 so rash a mode of getting rid of them as in a great  
 majority of cases the symptoms would probably

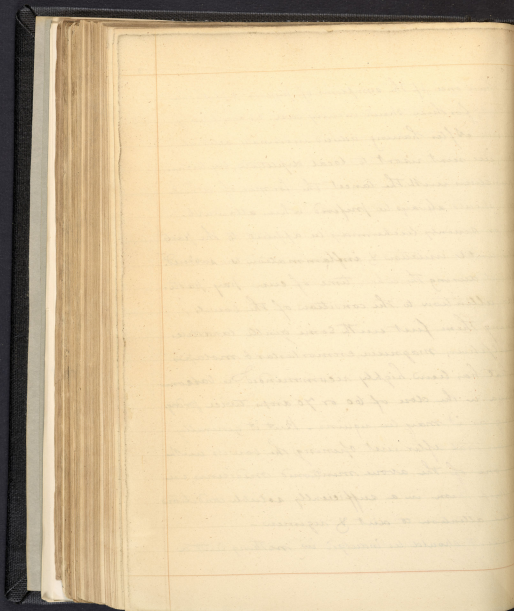


prove so distressing as to hazard life or limb, & they  
 should therefore, by all means, & under all circumstances,  
 be returned, if properly, immediately & retained in their  
 position the latter of which the muscle will most  
 commonly effect. These parts are very liable to affec-  
 tions from other causes which often bear a great resem-  
 blance to piles; but they are generally specific diseases  
 & will in a majority of cases prove to be syphilitic, or  
 cancerous, & their nature sufficiently warns the necessity  
 of ~~paying~~ being very particular, that we do not  
 mistake them, a blunder in practice which might be  
 productive of much evil, as the treatment in these  
 cases must necessarily be very dissimilar.

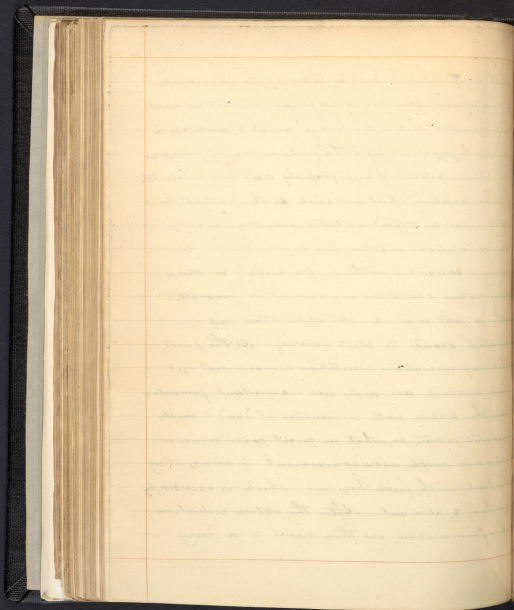
Treatment A question long agitated here presents itself,  
 on which the opinions of the medical world have been  
 much divided. Whether an attempt should be made at  
 a cure? One party concerned in the dispute as stated by  
 his followers considering Haemorrhoids as well as other  
 Haemorrhages as an effort of nature to eliminate  
 portions of vitiated or superabundant fluids of the body



for vice & salutary purposes, have loudly declaimed against all attempts at cure, alleging that it was counteracting & opposing the curative intentions of nature & exposing the patient to a long train of direful consequences, which as a popular opinion exists to a considerable extent even at the present time. Note those who maintain the opposite position consider with much more reason, that in common with most other diseases they demand our utmost endeavours for their prevention & cure. They are at the same time aware that it would be very unsafe to heal up immediately drains which have been long established, particularly in patients predisposed to pulmonary diseases; but as a general rule, we are warranted in effecting as speedy a cure as possible, & should never neglect the opportunity in the early stages of the complaint. As a primary step in the treatment we are to confine the patient scrupulously to a horizontal posture, & draw blood generally to a considerable extent, which will in many cases require repetition, & sometimes

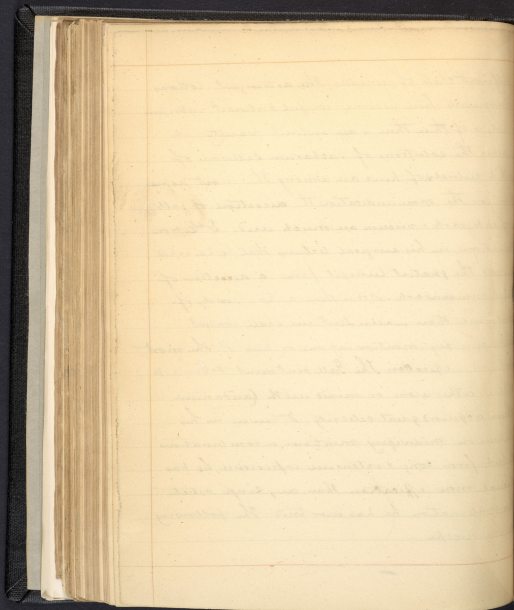


more than once if the symptoms of pyrexia & plethora  
 run high; for these should in every case be completely  
 subdued. After having reduced inordinate arterial  
 action, we next resort to local depletion, by leeches,  
 or punctures with the lancet the former of which  
 modes should always be preferred, when attainable  
 sixty or seventy leeches may be applied to the part  
 daily until irritation & inflammation is subdued.  
 We must during the whole time of cure pay partic-  
 ular attention to the condition of the bowels,  
 opening them first with some gentle laxative  
 as sulphur, magnesia, croton tincture & molasses  
 or what has been highly recommended is balsam  
 Copaiba in the dose of 60. or 70 drops twice per day,  
 as long as it may be required. But it generally  
 happens that after first opening the bowels with  
 some one of the above mentioned medicines, we  
 may keep them in a sufficiently soluble condition  
 by due attention to diet & regimen -  
 The patient should be indulged in nothing but a

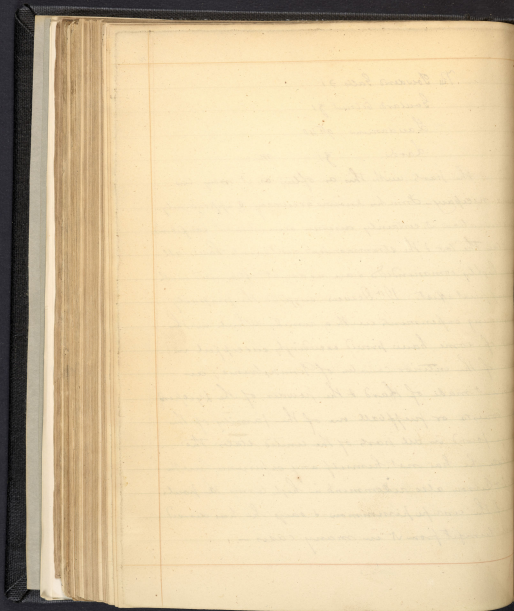




select vegetable diet, such as baked apples & pears, ripe sub-acid fruits, stewed or boiled prunes or what in most cases answers still better is *age much* & *melapex* as advised & practiced by Dr. Keppich in cases of prolapus ani; These articles of diet properly used independent of their laxative effect are such as the patient should alone use, as affording but a small quantity of excrementitious matter. The drinks should be cooling & subacid & nothing of a heating or stimulating nature should on any account be permitted either in food or drink - All applications applied in this stage should be bland & cooling - At this period while inflammation & irritation remain not yet quite subdued we may use emollient fomentations, the sitz bath a practice of bread & milk or scraped carrots or what in most cases answers better & is much more convenient is anointing the parts with fresh hog lard which is exceedingly soothing & pleasant. After the entire reduction of inflammation we then resort to a very



different class of remedies, the astringent lotions  
& unguents here become useful & almost indispen-  
sible & of these there is ~~an~~ infinite variety. As  
washes the solutions of saccharum salivum of  
White vitriol & of kino are among the most popular  
for the same indication the decoction of galls  
& of oak bark & viscum are much used. Dr. Gibson  
mentions in his surgical lectures that he has expe-  
rienced the greatest benefit from a decoction of  
the peruvian bark or is there a less diversity of  
ointments than washes but we shall content  
ourselves by mentioning one or two of the most  
popular & efficacious. The Gall ointment & Goulard's  
Extract either alone or mixed with laudanum  
have acquired great celebrity. Dr. Dewees in his  
lectures on midwifery mentions a combination  
which from long & extensive experience he has  
found more efficacious than any single article  
or combination he has ever tried. The following  
is his recipe



No. 7  
Powdered Galls 31

Goulard's Extract 31

Laudanum grs 40

Lard 31 M.

Enjoin the parts with this as often as it may be  
found necessary - From his known accuracy & apparently  
of observation it certainly deserves our utmost confidence  
The Elder the Tar & the stramonium ointments have all  
been highly commended & are no doubt often used with  
the happiest effect. Dr. Devere suggested the propriety  
of making experiments with a remedy which in the  
hands of some have proved exceedingly successful in  
some of the interior counties of Pennsylvania; an  
ointment made of Hard & the powder of the Lycopers  
don bonista or puffball one of the family of the  
fungi found in all parts of the United States. tho  
he states he has not himself any experience with  
it. Dr. Nelson also recommends in high terms the poultice  
of the unripe persimmon & says he has derived  
much benefit from it in many cases -



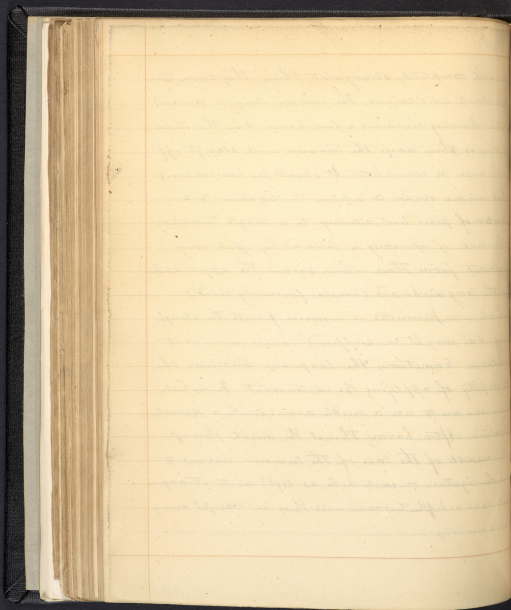
When from the causes already mentioned these cancers  
become hard & sarcomatous we are unable  
to effect a cure by the means detailed generally &  
we must now resort to a very different mode of  
treatment strictly surgical - In this case they are  
either to be removed by the actual cautery as prac-  
ticed by the older surgeons but which has almost  
fallen almost into disrepute, or removed by  
means of the ligature or cutting instruments  
the two last of which modes have their advocates  
among the celebrated surgeons of the present day.  
Ward & Petit were in the habit of removing  
them with the knife or scissors, the former  
supposing that one small tumour which is fre-  
quently found near the orifice of the rectum much  
more tender than the rest was the cause of  
all the mischief & which being removed would  
cure the remainder & this view to a certain extent  
has been realized though in a greater number of  
cases it has totally failed & fatal hemorrhage





has followed the operation. The latter was induced to use the knife from having seen the ligature prove fatal from the irritation produced & this may be explained on the clumsy mode of applying the ligature in his day but which the improvements of the present has almost entirely remedied. Mr. Abernethy has from some cause advocated the practice of excision probably from the reputed success which has attended his operations & the anxiety which exists abroad to practice improvements truly of American origin. But the ligature as advised & practiced by Dr. Physick is certainly much preferable in most cases to the knife. It removes the tumours without apprehension from Haemorrhage & with very little irritation the only consequences to be feared.

His practice is to use a small double canula not more than an inch & a half long armed with a firm iron wire in the loop of which he encloses the tumour & makes as firm a compression on them



as will completely strangulate them. They soon turn  
of a dark livid colour. The canula may be removed  
after having remained a few hours & in the course  
of two or three days the tumour will slough off  
& the cure be completed. It should be remembered  
that we are never to apply the ligature to a  
cluster of piles but always to a single tumour.  
This mode of operating is followed by effects very  
different from those which succeed the application  
of the long awkward canula formerly used &  
which was permitted to remain until the slough-  
ing & as might be supposed causes very great  
irritation. Sometimes the large size precludes the  
necessity of applying the instrument. In which  
case we are to use a needle armed with a double  
ligature. After having thrust the needle through  
the middle of the base of the tumour we are to  
tie the ligatures on each side so tight as to strangu-  
late each side of the tumour will thus be brought away  
in a few days.



If the bleeding from within the rectum prove very  
profuse we may introduce a large bougie so as to  
make compression alone or we may smear it with  
some astringent, or what in most cases answers  
better either is a sheep's gut introduced into the  
rectum & distended with cold vinegar & water, or  
lead water. In numerous cases all our endeav-  
ours will prove ineffectual to cure Haemorrhoids  
until we remove the cause of this production,  
this is particularly the case in pregnant women &  
persons labouring under ascites & here all our  
applications will only prove palliative.

When the patient becomes convalescent he should  
be allowed a light but generous diet & compelled  
to use moderate exercise, in the open air. His bowels  
should be kept loose, & he should carefully avoid  
all the exciting causes —

